

PM offers Idris Jala to 'transform' Africa
Malaysiakini.com
June 21, 2011

Malaysia stands ready to help African countries undertake economic transformation and is willing to send Idris Jala, the chief executive officer of the Performance Management and Delivery Unit (Pemandu) to help them with the mammoth task, Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak said today.

Malaysia is willing to share with and learn from African countries in transforming and developing socio-economic smart partnerships, he said.

"We can even send Datuk Idris to your country for a while, but don't keep him for too long as we need him here.

"He is not transferable and there is no transfer fee for him," he said in jest at the closing of the ninth Langkawi International Dialogue (LID) 2011 in Putrajaya today.

Najib described transformation as a journey.

"Transforming Africa from a food deficit continent to a food surplus continent is transformation and increasing production from one tonne per hectare to six tonnes per hectare is also transformation.

"Changing from agro to agro-business is transformation, evolving from poor governance to good governance is also transformation," Najib added.

In a related development, the business forum will be a permanent feature of the smart partnership dialogue which will be held biennially, prime minister said at the end of the LID today.

Forum will include SMEs

Announcing new initiatives and measures to further enhance the dialogue, which began in 1995, and the smart partnership movement, Najib said the forum would include small-and-medium enterprises and business franchise opportunities between Malaysia, Africa and the Caribbean.

The next dialogue, the Southern Africa International Dialogue (Said) will be hosted by Tanzania, he announced in an 'Outcome Document' at the closing ceremony of the three-day LID attended by leaders, ministers and officials from 14 African and Caribbean countries. Malaysia has been the host of the LID.

Najib said steps would be taken to promote technology-driven smart partnership cooperation to address socio-economic disparity and increase productivity and income.

Besides this, leaders agreed there would be initiatives to enhance and facilitate specialisation and internalisation of research and development within governments to nurture knowledge and innovation-based economies.

Leaders attending LID2011, held for the first time in Putrajaya, also agreed there was need for smart partnerships to progress towards ensuring good governance and effective administration.

This was to preserve social cohesion and achieve socio-economic growth and political stability, the prime minister said.

He also said leaders agreed for the dialogue to be held biennially so as to allow more time for participating countries to implement initiatives and plan for future prospects.

- Bernama

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